THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Review of the progress of the implementation of NREGA is done on regular basis NREGA has been reviewed at the highest level in Prime Minister's review meeting on 20.6.2007. Performance Review Committee meetings are undertaken by the Minister of Rural Development and Secretary (Rural Development) from time to time. During the year 2007-08, three Regional Review Committee meetings have been held to cover review of all States. These were held at Orissa, Guwahati and Jaipur. A Central Employment Guarantee Council was constituted on 22.9.2006 to review and monitor the implementation of the Act. The Council has so far held three meetings and reviewed the implementation of NREGA. Members of the Council also conduct field visits in various States to oversee the progress of the Act. An Executive Committee constituted under the Central Council reviewed the progress of the Act in its meeting held on 16.8.2007.

Progress of NREGA was also shared in the interactive session with Members of Parliament held during 20th - 23rd August, 2007 and 5th -6th September, 2007. National Level Monitors (NLMs) and Area Officers of the Ministry visit various districts to oversee the progress of the Act. the Area Officers have been directed to cover 10 village during their each visit. Vigilance and Monitoring Committees have also been set up to review the implementation of the Act.

(c) and (d) NREGA is demand driven. The pace of implementation of the Act varies from State to State based on the scale and volume of demand in a particular context. During the year 2006-2007, a total of 2.12 crore households had demanded employment, out of which, 2.10 crore were provided employment. During the current year upto September, 2007 a total of 1.98 crore households have demanded employment, out of which, 1.88 crore have been provided employment. However, in some States the implementation of the Act has been affected due to State Assembly elections and also due to natural calamities like rains, floods etc. As employment is provided under the Act on demand, there are not fixed targets and therefore, it is not correct to say that a particular State is lagging behind.

Employment Opportunities in Organised Sector

†*100. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite increase in annual growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the number of employment opportunities in the organised sector is decreasing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the numnber of employment opportunities in the organised sector in the year 2000 and 2006 respectively; and

(d) the names of the regions where maximum and minimum number of employment opportunities have increased in the above mentioned period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT: (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Employment in the organised sector declined by 15.02 lakh in March, 2005 as compared to March, 2000. The decline in employment opportunities in the organised sector is partly due to more investment in capital intensive rather than labour intensive technology in the organised sector, outsourcing and right sizing of the public sector.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(c) Based on Employment Market Information, the total number of employees in the organised sector was 279.60 lakhs as on 31.03.2000 and 264.58 lakh as on 31.03.2005.

(d) Highest growth rate of 1.5% in employment in the organised sector was recorded in case of North-Eastern Region and minimum growth rate of (-) 9.3% was observed for the Central Zone consisting of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

National Authority for geographical indicators for intellectual property rights

291. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a National Authority to determine geographical indicators is necessary to secure against possible infringment of intellectual property right of any community or region;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the country does not have such national authority to determine geographical indicators;

(c) if so, the reasons for delay in setting up such national authority and what steps are being taken to expedite the processes; and

(d) whether Government has made transitory arrangement in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) India has enacted the Geographical indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 which came into force from 15th September, 2003, to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods. For the facilitation of registration of geographical indications, Geographical Indications Registry has been set up at Chennai.

Non-availability of residues detection facilities

292. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that imported agricultural commodities were not subjected for the presence of presticides residues due to non-availability of residues detection facilities; and

(b) how many consignments of our agricultural commodities have been returned by other countries on account of presence of unacceptable levels of presticies residues in the past five years and details of commodities and countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Report on SEZs by MPs panel

293. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a panel of Member of Parliament has reportedly submitted the Report titled "The functioning of Special Economic Zones" on June 20, 2007;